

PLATE II.—THE BEGGAR'S OAK.

THE BEGGAR'S OAK stands in Bagot's Park, about four miles from Blithfield, the seat of the Right Honorable Lord Bagot, near Litchfield. The scenery which surrounds it, is singularly interesting and appropriate—the stillness of antique trees and forest glades is relieved by animated groups of deer, whose characteristics peculiarly suit the features of the scene; and by a still more striking race of wild goats, originally presented, by Richard the Second, to one of Lord Bagot's ancestors.

The Beggar's Oak is supposed to have received its name from the accommodation it is so well calculated to afford in its ample canopy, "star-proof," and its moss-grown roots, to the weary mendicants who may in former times have been tempted to seek the shade of its branches, for repose or shelter. Its girth at five feet from the ground is twenty feet; the circumference of the roots which project above the surface of the ground is sixty-eight feet; and the branches extend about sixteen yards from the trunk in every direction. It contains by admeasurement eight hundred and seventy-seven cubic feet of timber, which, including the bark, would have produced, at a price offered for it in 1812, the sum of £202 14s. 9d. But this noble tree, as well as many other of the "giants of the forests," with which Bagot's Park abounds, are secure from the axe, under the protection of their present munificent proprietor; who best shows his sense of the value of the woody domains, received from his ancestors, by endeavouring to secure the same gratification to his posterity; annually planting a large portion of his estates, with a taste and zeal which well deserves to be imitated, by all such landed proprietors as may be actuated by a laudable ambition to make their private possessions a source of public ornament and of national wealth.

PLATE III.—THE GREAT OAK AT FREDVILLE.

THIS remarkable tree, which, from its size and grandeur, has received the appropriate name of *Majesty*, stands nearly in front of the family mansion of John Plumptre, Esquire, in his park at Fredville, in the parish of Nonnington, Kent. At eight feet from the ground, its circumference exceeds twenty-eight feet, and it contains above fourteen hundred feet of timber.

Two other oaks in the immediate vicinity of the above, present a graceful contrast in character; as may be imagined from the epithets of *Stately* and *Beauty*, by which they are distinguished. The former is of singularly noble aspect, the stem going up straight and clean to the height of about seventy feet; the girth, at four feet from the ground, is eighteen feet, and it contains above five hundred feet of timber. The circumference of the latter at an equal height is about sixteen feet, and its solid contents are nearly the same. Altogether these three Graces of the forest form, immediately within sight of the house, a group, which, for magnificence and beauty, is not perhaps exceeded by any other of the same nature; awakening in the mind of the spectator, the most agreeable associations of the freedom and grandeur of woodland scenery, with the security and refinements of cultivated life.

PLATE IV.—THE PANSHANGER OAK.

THIS elegant tree, according to tradition, was known as "the great Oak of Panshanger," more than a century ago; it appears, however, even now, to have scarcely reached its prime; the waving lightness of its feathered branches, dipping down, towards its stem, to the very ground, the straightness of its trunk, and the redundancy of its foliage, all give it a character opposite to that of antiquity; and fit it for the cultivated and sequestered pleasure grounds belonging to the mansion of Earl Cowper, at Panshanger, in Hertfordshire; where it stands surrounded with evergreens and lighter shrubs, of which it seems at once the guardian and the pride. It contains one thousand feet of timber, and is nineteen feet in circumference, at three feet from the ground.